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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Statement of Ranking Member Doc Hastings
Committee on Natural Resources
Hearing on H.R. 4347 (Boren)
June 9, 2010

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for scheduling this hearing on the Department of the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act of 2009.

This legislation builds upon a policy of promoting tribal self-determination that was initiated in the modern era by President Richard Nixon in his Special Message on Indian Affairs, dated July 8, 1970.

While the principle of tribal self-determination is a simple one, H.R. 4347 is quite lengthy and complex. Three years ago the Committee held a hearing on a similar version of the bill, and at that time, the Department of the Interior raised a number of institutional as well as constitutional concerns with the proposal.

It is my understanding that H.R. 4347 is somewhat scaled back compared to the previous version. I look forward to hearing the analysis of today's witnesses as we explore the means of maximizing the freedom of tribes to improve the lives of their members.